

MICHAEL K. ANDERSON,)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.) No. 4:09CV1131 JCH
)
 STATE OF MISSOURI, et al.,)
)
 Defendants.)

This matter is before the Court upon the motion of Michael Anderson (registration no. 518933), an inmate at Moberly Correctional Center, for leave to commence this action without payment of the required filing fee [Doc. #2]. For the reasons stated below, the Court finds that plaintiff does not have sufficient funds to pay the entire filing fee and will assess an initial partial filing fee of \$6.20. See 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1). Furthermore, based upon a review of the complaint, the Court finds that the complaint should be dismissed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1), a prisoner bringing a civil action in forma pauperis is required to pay the full amount of the filing fee. If the prisoner has insufficient funds in his or her prison account to pay the entire fee, the Court must assess and, when funds exist, collect an initial partial filing fee of 20 percent of the

greater of (1) the average monthly deposits in the prisoner's account, or (2) the average monthly balance in the prisoner's account for the prior six-month period. After payment of the initial partial filing fee, the prisoner is required to make monthly payments of 20 percent of the preceding month's income credited to the prisoner's account. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(2). The agency having custody of the prisoner will forward these monthly payments to the Clerk of Court each time the amount in the prisoner's account exceeds \$10, until the filing fee is fully paid. Id.

Plaintiff has submitted an affidavit and a certified copy of his prison account statement for the six-month period immediately preceding the submission of his complaint. A review of plaintiff's account indicates an average monthly deposit of \$31.00, and an average monthly balance of \$24.02. Plaintiff has insufficient funds to pay the entire filing fee. Accordingly, the Court will assess an initial partial filing fee of \$6.20, which is 20 percent of plaintiff's average monthly deposit.

28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B), the Court must dismiss a complaint filed in forma pauperis if the action is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. An action is frivolous if it "lacks an arguable basis in either law or fact." Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 328 (1989). An action is malicious if it is

undertaken for the purpose of harassing the named defendants and not for the purpose of vindicating a cognizable right. Spencer v. Rhodes, 656 F. Supp. 458, 461-63 (E.D.N.C. 1987), aff'd 826 F.2d 1059 (4th Cir. 1987).

To determine whether an action fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, the Court must engage in a two-step inquiry. First, the Court must identify the allegations in the complaint that are not entitled to the assumption of truth. Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 129 S. Ct. 1937, 1950-51 (2009). These include “legal conclusions” and “[t]hreadbare recitals of the elements of a cause of action [that are] supported by mere conclusory statements.” Id. at 1949. Second, the Court must determine whether the complaint states a plausible claim for relief. Id. at 1950-51. This is a “context-specific task that requires the reviewing court to draw on its judicial experience and common sense.” Id. at 1950. The plaintiff is required to plead facts that show more than the “mere possibility of misconduct.” Id. The Court must review the factual allegations in the complaint “to determine if they plausibly suggest an entitlement to relief.” Id. at 1951. When faced with alternative explanations for the alleged misconduct, the Court may exercise its judgment in determining whether plaintiff’s conclusion is the most plausible or whether it is more likely that no misconduct occurred. Id. at 1950, 51-52.

The Complaint

Plaintiff brings this action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. Named as defendants are the State of Missouri, the Missouri Department of Corrections, the Board of Probation and Parole (the “Board”), and several employees of the Board.

The complaint, which is forty-two pages long, consists primarily of trivial complaints relating to plaintiff’s treatment by employees of the Board. For example, he alleges that defendants insulted him on several occasions and denied him a band-aid on one occasion. Plaintiff also claims, in mostly conclusory language, that his probation was unfairly revoked. Plaintiff brings claims against several defendants under the theory of respondeat superior.

Discussion

Plaintiff’s claims against the State of Missouri, the Department of Corrections, and the Board are barred by the Eleventh Amendment. See Alabama v. Pugh, 438 U.S. 781, 782 (1978). Moreover, these defendants are not “persons” for purposes of a § 1983 action. Will v. Michigan Dept. of State Police, 491 U.S. 58, 63 (1989).

A plaintiff in a § 1983 suit may not question the validity of the confinement resulting from a parole revocation hearing if he does not allege that the parole board’s decision has been reversed, expunged, set aside or called into question. Littles v. Bd. of Pardons and Paroles Div., 68 F.3d 122, 123 (5th Cir.1995); see also McGrew v.

Texas Bd. of Pardons & Paroles, 47 F.3d 158, 161 (5th Cir.1995) (Heck bars § 1983 action challenging revocation of supervised release);c.f., Schafer v. Moore, 46 F.3d 43, 45 (8th Cir. 1995) (per curiam) (holding that Heck precludes § 1983 action which would impliedly invalidate a denial of parole as challenge to duration of confinement). Plaintiff has not alleged that the Board's decision has been set aside. As a result, plaintiff's claim for unlawful revocation of parole is Heck barred.

Plaintiff's claims regarding the manner in which the employees of the Board treated him, such as those claims in which plaintiff says he was insulted, simply fail to rise to the level of a constitutional violation. As a result, they fail to state a claim under § 1983.

"Liability under § 1983 requires a causal link to, and direct responsibility for, the alleged deprivation of rights." Madewell v. Roberts, 909 F.2d 1203, 1208 (8th Cir. 1990); see also Martin v. Sargent, 780 F.2d 1334, 1338 (8th Cir. 1985) (claim not cognizable under § 1983 where plaintiff fails to allege that defendant was personally involved in or directly responsible for the incidents that injured plaintiff); Boyd v. Knox, 47 F.3d 966, 968 (8th Cir. 1995) (respondeat superior theory inapplicable in § 1983 suits). As a result, plaintiff's claims against the supervisory defendants further fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.

For these reasons, the Court will dismiss this action under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e).

Accordingly,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that plaintiff's motion to proceed in forma pauperis [Doc. #2] is **GRANTED**.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the plaintiff shall pay an initial filing fee of \$6.20 within thirty (30) days of the date of this Order. Plaintiff is instructed to make his remittance payable to "Clerk, United States District Court," and to include upon it: (1) his name; (2) his prison registration number; (3) the case number; and (4) that the remittance is for an original proceeding.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk shall not issue process or cause process to issue upon the complaint because the complaint is legally frivolous or fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, or both.

An Order of Dismissal will accompany this Memorandum and Order.

Dated this 26th day of October, 2009.

/s/ Jean C. Hamilton
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE